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# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 6 ~ Number 10

October 1, 1988





# Commentary

BOB  
HICKS

## messing about in BOATS

PUBLISHED TWICE A MONTH, 24 ISSUES A YEAR. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE IS \$20 FOR 24 ISSUES.

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### Our Next Issue...

Will include a couple of "pow-erboat" features, one on Boston's Tugboat Muster, the second on the steamboat meet on Lake Winnepe-saukee. Back in Boston, we'll have a pictorial tour of the Boston harbor islands, a bit of almost-wilderness in a metropolitan port. Supplementing our new serial on Bishop's pa-per canoe voyage will be an article on the technology of 19th century paper boats. And continuing in an antiquarian vein, there'll be an 1870 article on proas. Townie Tom returns with a chronicle of his dif-ficulties with a mast for his "New York" boat. The "Munchausen Moor-age Regatta" is a tale of small craft differences resolved. A look at Henry David Thoreau's lifelong fascination with small boats might make it too.

### On the Cover...

The Cape Rosier Coracle at-tracted a lot of attention at the Wooden Boat Show, particularly from the youngsters. It's just part of this issue's major report on the 1988 Show.

Here's our annual issue pretty much devoted to the Wooden Boat Show. It's late because I'm late getting it together. What with getting a booth ready this year for our own participation, and finalizing our "Cockleshell" project for display, and spending five days in all going to and being at the Show, well, you can see...

The Wooden Boat Show continues to suffer from lack of participation from area wooden boat builders. A lot of the interested public came this year, and there were plenty of interesting things to see. But not enough new wooden boats and their builders. One reader re-marked to me that he'd brought along his camera to photograph the small daysailers that he found appealing, for later contemplation of the purchase of one in the depths of February's desperation season. He said it didn't take him long to get all his photos.

His comments illustrate to me the problem the potential exhibitors face. They are unlikely to sell a boat "on the spot" for wooden boat folks do not seem to come to the Show checkbooks in hand. They come to see at close range what their possible dreamboat, derived from printed articles or ads or from books, really looks like. The builder isn't there because he already knows he's unlikely to sell the boat right then, so the potenti-al buyer doesn't get to see his work. So which comes first?

You'll notice in our report in this issue that there were a number of builders of wooden canoes exhib-it-ing this year. Yet, two other small canoe builders both gave me their cards when they dropped by my booth, but both also said they couldn't afford to be in the Show. \$500-\$600 to be here, five days aw-ay from the shop, probably no sale on the spot..." The rationale.

The cost is not just the Show space, the Small Builders' Section was sold on a square foot basis, length times beam, and so you could be there for much less than the \$350, 10'x10' booth under the tent would cost. But, there was that irritating \$100 insurance fee for anyone not covered by his own business premises liability insur-ance when at a Show. The Show management arranged accommoda-tion at University of Rhode Island facil-ities across the Jamestown Bridge in Narragansett for \$16 per night. Hardly expensive. And local camp-grounds rent sites at about \$12 a night with hookups. Eating in local "working man" restaurants is no

more costly than anywhere else. Yet, taking advantage of all the least costly accommodations still added up to several hundred dollars minimum. And the lost time away from the shop.

The vast majority of the 200 or more builders of wooden boats in the northeast within a day's drive of Newport are one-man shops, op-erating on the edge of financial ruin. These guys HAVE to stay home and keep working. They do NOT have \$500 in a pocket to ind-dulge in even a minimum appear-ance at the Wooden Boat Show. Yet, by allowing these constraints to persuade them to not attend, they foreclose on their own future busi-ness, for most of them will not succeed by simply staying home and hoping for orders. They HAVE to make themselves known to potential buyers of their boats. Advertising. This they also do little of, another cost of business they'd rather not pay. Participation in the Wooden Boat Show is "in-person advertis-ing", for the cost of a small ad in "Wooden Boat" a builder can show people his product, talk to them about it, establish himself as a po-tential source for their dream boats.

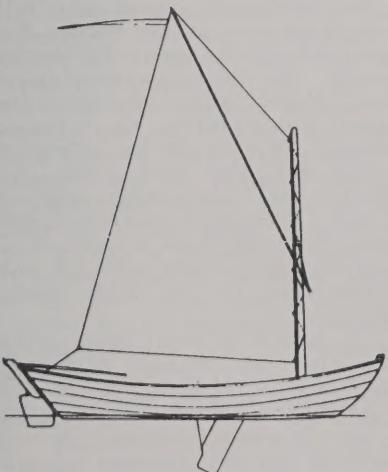
There is another group of builders who do not appear. These are those who are busy. They have orders and customers so why go to a Wooden Boat Show? I know a num-ber of these, in fact several were there as spectators, taking a day off to see what others are doing. While these more successful build-ers do not need more work right now, they too should be thinking about the future of wooden boat-build-ing and thus their own fu-ture. The long view isn't typical of this trade, though.

So the agonizing goes on over this show. Newport is expensive and an aggravating tourist town to have to come to, but it is also ve-ry centrally located to draw from all of New England, New York, New Jersey and down to the Chesa-peake area, all within a day's trav-el. The promoters, with several big boat shows for the consumer boating public, sail and power, don't need this marginal show if the trade doesn't seem to. Where else? Who else to run it? All suggestions about holding such a show I hear cannot come up with specific alter-natives. How about next year?

Well, the Wooden Boat Show has a group of advisors drawn from exhibitors and they will meet later this fall with the management to see what 1989 will bring.



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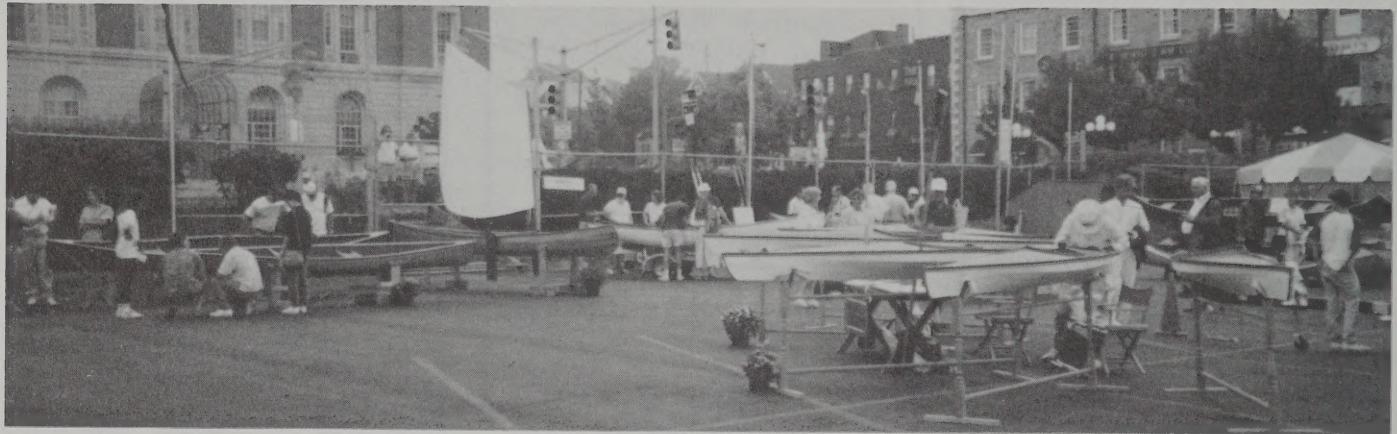
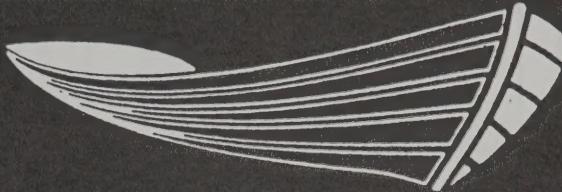
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# THE WOODEN BOAT SHOW



The small boatbuilders' exhibit area was right up by the Show's main entrance.

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks

The first thing you would see upon entering this year's Wooden Boat Show at Newport was again (as last year) the outdoor displays of the small boat builders. While this area was conceived of as a minimum cost way for small builders to take part in the Show, it was nevertheless given up-front location, not placed off in a remote corner somewhere. When you realized that what you were seeing as you came through the gate was the small builders, you then had to wonder why more had not taken advantage of this opportunity. There was plenty of room for more. About a half-dozen occupied the available spaces, with room leftover for twice that again. Those who were there certainly enjoyed maximum exposure to the attending public.

Getting around to the lagoon for the in-the-water boat displays, again there was room available. The space not taken up by builders of new wooden boats was taken over by encroaching used wooden yachts from that flourishing aspect of the Show. Several short demo docks normally occupied by small boat builders were completely absent and the space along the float they would have been attached to taken over by the used boats.

Marching through the tents, you would find a number of exhibitors of products and services directed at the wooden boat market. Also several more smaller builders occupying multiple adjacent booths chose the under-cover areas, weather is not always as nice as it might be for this show.

If looking at gold platers was your interest, an adjacent area of docks held a number of private yachts entered into the "Concourse d' Elegance". And "HMS Rose", a replica square-rigger was open for inspection for a modest fee. "Shamrock", the J-boat owned by Newport's Museum of Yachting was also open for inspection by anyone choosing to sign up for a Museum membership.

"Wooden Boat" magazine undertook to hold a Thursday evening seminar for boatbuilders on developing their marketing. It was a comprehensive program of lectures, unfortunately compressed into a crowded evening after the Show closed, with the open bar and table of munchies attracting a number of additional attendees with no connection to the trade, like the crew of HMS Rose, attracted by the free rum. The thrust of merchandising focussed on getting organized as a trade, one pitch was to join an existing such trade group of builders and restorers at only \$300 dues. All the bureaucratic stuff that the small businessman faces today was presented as necessary, if perhaps not welcome, and it required no great amount of clairvoyance to see that those small builders who were there were not persuaded. It seemed to me that this approach, while logical and reasonable, is one of persuading individualists to unite. A contradiction in terms.

This year we had a full time booth again as Jane spent the four days with me so I could do the usual tours of the Show looking for

news of interest for publication in this issue, while she manned our booth. We enjoyed meeting many, many readers, introduced the magazine to others interested enough to stop by, sold out our remaining stock of "Adventures Down the Bay" books, and introduced our little "Cockleshell" kayak design, offering a package of building instructions and full-size patterns. It was a good show for us, and we're certainly small.

Despite the lack of support from the wooden boat building trade in the northeast, there was still much to be seen at the Wooden Boat Show. As in the past, I'll ramble through the Show commenting on those boats and exhibits that caught my attention as being of interest. This is not an attempt to mention all who were there, the magazine isn't big enough, nor was my time, even over four days, sufficient to have done something on everyone. So onward into my subjective view of the 1988 Wooden Boat Show.

A couple of small boats in the water right at the head of the lagoon got a lot of attention. Stanley Joseph's Cape Rosier Coracle, a little 6' diameter canvas covered basket of sticks, charmed all who saw it, and young people in particular, couldn't wait to get a try in it paddling or sculling it up and down the lagoon. Stanley makes wreaths and baskets in Harborside, Maine, and quite accidentally got introduced to the Show when manager Abby Murphy drove into his farm, lost while on a trip visiting

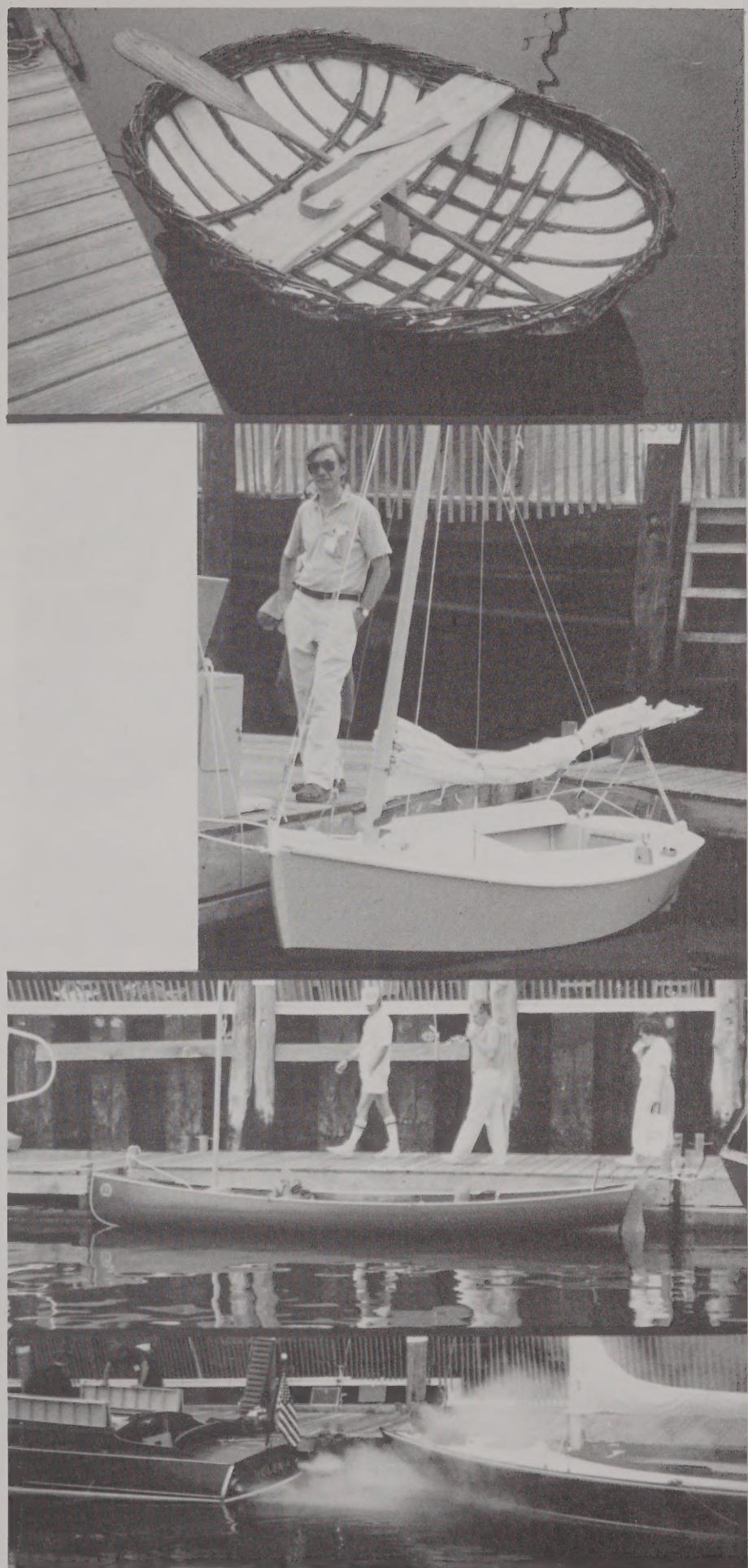
boatbuilders in the area. It was a serendipitous happening, the Irish coracle certainly was enchanting, if perhaps not really what one would want for his next wooden boat. Cape Rosier Wreaths, Stanley Joseph, Harborside, ME 04642, (207) 326-4062.

Doug Alvord's little 9' "model" of his new line of Maine Sharpie plans, built by Dynamite Payson, was, however, one that many might want for their next wooden boat. Doug ran out of his supply of building plans early in the Show, and had to repeatedly have locally quick-printed additional brochures and study plan sets. The smallest of Doug's designs is a 12' daysailer, but there were those who wanted to build the 9' "model" and announced they would scale down the 12' plans to do so. The Maine Sharpie, c/o Douglas Alvord, HCR 35, Box 156, Thomaston, ME 04661.

Mason Smith's "Adirondack Goodboat" won the whimsy award in my view, his version of the hallowed craft of similar name is his concept of the "do-it-all" boat. It's built by the "constant camber" laminated wooden hull method and offers rowing, sailing and motoring capabilities all from a 17' boat weighing only 105 pounds. Mason aims at everyone, "children can row it in safety and their grandparents will appreciate its comfort and stability." Adirondack Good Boat, North Point Rd., Long Lake, NY 12847.

Periodically during the Show there'd be a sudden eruption of big noise from the lagoon. The Turcotte Brothers, offering a line of Garwood replica mahogany speedboats, would start up the real thing, "Helen-A", a 1926 "Baby Gar" powered by a 500 horsepower, twelve cylinder Liberty engine of World War I aircraft vintage. This is a superb restoration of a rare original and has been advertised at \$185,000 in "Wooden Boat". It was reportedly recently bid up to \$95,000 at the Newport Museum of Yachting auction, not coming close to the reserve, and thus remaining unsold. Early on Sunday morning we heard the bellow again as we toured the Show prior to opening time. It was a tuneup apparently, and as we watched the black smoke from the twin pipes shroud the bow of Covey Island Boatworks immaculate restoration of a Bluenose sloop, we thought it was fortunate that the sloop was painted black. Gar Wood Boat Company, 329 Broadway, Watervliet, NY 12189, (518) 273-2654.

Right, from the top: The Cape Rosier Coracle. Doug Alvord and his "model" Maine Sharpie. Mason Smith's Adirondack "Goodboat". Early morning pollution in the lagoon.

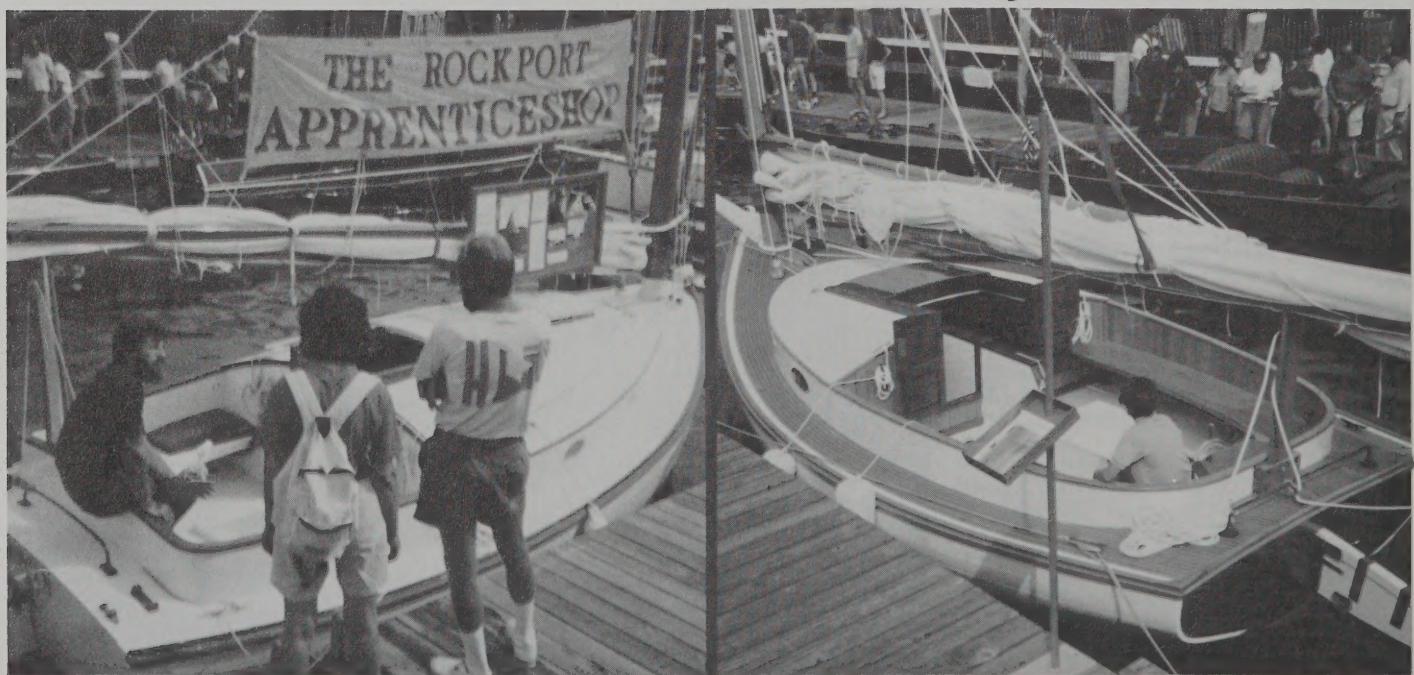




That Bluenose sloop was offered for sale by the Nova Scotia boatyard and also served as an example of their workmanship. It was immaculate, and the placard announced it as, "Shady Lady", 1946 Bluenose Sloop, Hull #6, designed by W.J. Roue. Winner of the "Boat of the Show" award, Boston Boat Show, 1946. Built by L. Barkhouse, Chester, Nova Scotia, 1946. Restored and refitted by Covey Island Boatworks." The tender attached was equally immaculate and was also for sale, a 10' Chaisson. Covey Island Boatworks, Petite Riviere Bridge, Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia, Canada B0J 2P0, (902) 688-2843.

Another lovely restoration was a Herreshoff 12-1/2 done by Jeff Humphrey of Humphrey Boatworks in Mattapoisett, MA. The youthful proprietor of this one-man shop did major hull rebuilding and total cosmetic restoration on this old 1930 era classic for its long-time owners. Jeff worked his high school summers in local boat yards and decided why not do this kind of work for his own account. So he has, and now works all summer, and all holidays from attending Brown University on boat building and restoration. He's got ongoing in his shop a new Dark Harbor 17 classic on speculation, which he plans to exhibit at the 1989 Wooden Boat Show. At twenty years of age, Jeff Humphrey displays already highly developed skills in wooden boat craftsmanship. Young men, it can be done! Humphrey Boatworks, 45 Aucoot Rd., Mattapoisett, MA 02739, (508) 758-6234.

Left, from the top: Covey Island Boatwork's restoration of a Bluenose sloop. Jeff Humphry's restoration of a Herreshoff 12-1/2. Below, two ways to finish off a basic catboat design.



Moored just around the corner of a dock from one another in the lagoon were two catboats done up quite differently. A "yacht finished" catboat built at the Landing School of Boatbuilding featured much brightwork on decks, coaming, transom, hatch, etc. The usual beautiful work done by Landing students, where doing it right comes first before doing it quick. The other cat was built by the Rockport Apprenticeshop for Mystic Seaport's Ben Fuller, and was workboat finished. Bright spars were Ben's only concession to "yachtness" for his traditional craft. Its harder to spot flaws in workmanship on an all-painted boat, but a pretty close look at the details revealed the workboat cat to be as nicely done, and with similar reasoning; it was a learning to do it right project first, and a customer's boat second.

The Rockport Apprenticeshop also had an ongoing periodic display of planking a hull at its land site, once one peeked around behind the new "boutique". There was this very nice display of tee-shirts, prints of drawings of traditional craft, notepaper and cards, half models, and such nautical items. This must be some of the "marketing" that wooden boat builders must cultivate. A smiling Missy Hatch administered this new aspect of Lance Lee's vision when we happened by. The Rockport Apprenticeshop, Sea St., Rockport, ME 04856.

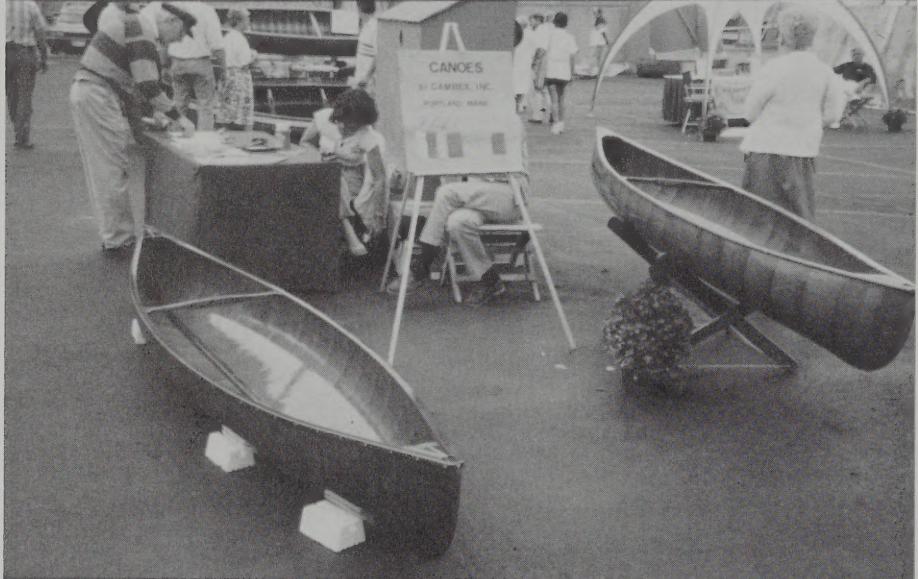
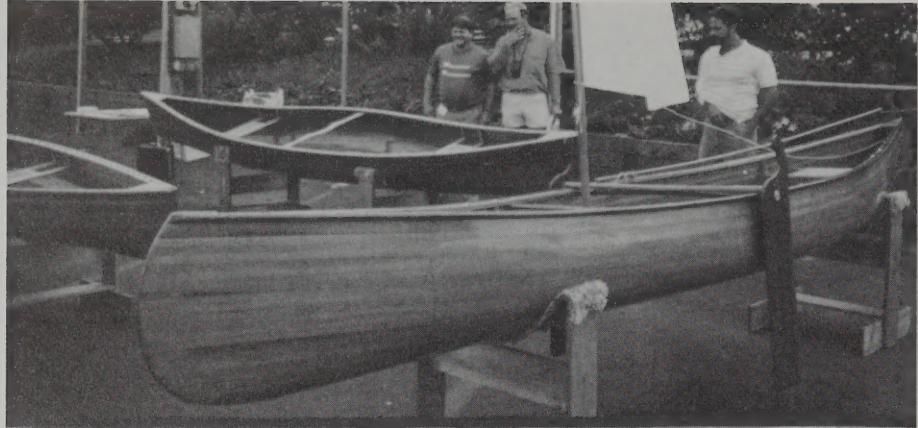
The array of boats in the lagoon would have been decimated were it not for the Landing School's fleet. In addition to their catboat, they had two of their Buzzards Bay 17 daysailers and a 26' Eldridge McInnis designed Bass Boat. Here was a departure in style for this school. While they had last year built a replica of a Hacker-craft mahogany speedboat, motor-boats are not the usual Landing fare. A couple of people who believe in the School offered to put up the money to build this bass boat as a change in the challenge facing the students, and it was offered at the Show at \$54,000. The Landing School of Boatbuilding, P.O. Box 1490, Kennebunkport, ME 04046, (207) 985-7976.

There weren't many small boats available for tryout, unlike at the Small Boat Show. One that was available, almost constantly in use, was John Farwell's Wooden Craft Whitehall. John was also one of the few exhibitors to appear at both the Small Boat Show and the Wooden Boat Show. The 15' strip built craft is an in-between boat, in between fiberglass and its often not so appealing appearance, especially interior, and classic plank-on-frame traditional but costly. John's trying to offer the cost advantages of continuous production



From the top:  
The Rockport  
Apprenticeshop  
presence.  
The Landing  
School's bass  
boat. Wooden  
Craft's Whitehall  
in action.





From the top: Lots of wooden canoes. Woodstrip Watercraft's strip built canoes. Cambex's vacuum bagged laminated canoes. The Wooden Canoe Heritage Association's restored traditional canoes. Fuat Latif's lap-strake canoe.

in wood that fiberglass builders can provide. The people who row his boat return all smiles. Wooden Craft, P.O. Box 191, Libertyville, IL 60048.

Strip built boats in the form of canoes were offered up in the small boatbuilder section by Woodstrip Watercraft of Pennsylvania. A year ago Woodstrip Watercraft was not in existence, just a gleam in its owner's eye. Now here they were with several stripper canoes, including a sailing model. The owner, formerly employed in sales work, builds his own boats, he's not just a marketer of others' work, as I first had thought possible. And unlike most small builders, he didn't ease into the new trade, he just went into it 100%. Being at the Wooden Boat Show was a major marketing effort on his part to introduce his boats to potential customers. Well, he had the best spot in the Show for it, first display one encountered upon coming through the gates. Woodstrip Watercraft, P.O. Box 1140, Lansdale, PA 19446, (215) 234-0680.

And over here, not far away, a different sort of wooden canoe, this one by Cambex Canoes of Portland, Maine. The "Stroudwater" model was a 10'6" version of Rutherford's "Wee Lassie" weighing in at about 22 pounds! The construction a sort of laminated hull of mahogany or cedar, kevlar, and fiberglass, all vacuum bag cold-molded with epoxy in what Cambex calls its CamVac (tm) method. Awlgrip finishes off the boat's natural wood appearance. The merging of plastic and wood technology approaches total in this product. Cambex, Inc., 57 Garrison St., Portland, ME 04102, (207) 774-9455.

And more canoes. The Wooden Canoe Heritage Association had a nice display of member-owned traditional wood canvas canoes. This nationwide club numbers about 1200 members, hosts an annual mid-summer get together that attracts several hundred members and canoes, and circulates a regular newsletter and club magazine. The boats, products of much love and attention, evoke that bygone era when canoeing was an enormously popular sport, not today's highly specialized competition oriented activity. The Wooden Canoe Heritage Association, c/o Edward Cumming, 38 Indian Meadow Dr., Northboro, MA 01532.

We're not yet done with canoes. Had other types of wooden boatbuilders supported the Show as well as these canoe people, it would have been a very crowded affair. Fuat Latif had one of his lap-strake double-paddle classics on display. Fuat's a refugee from New York City who fled to the woods of northern Vermont to live and build his beautifully crafted boats. His work is just superb, he has to have put enormous amounts of time

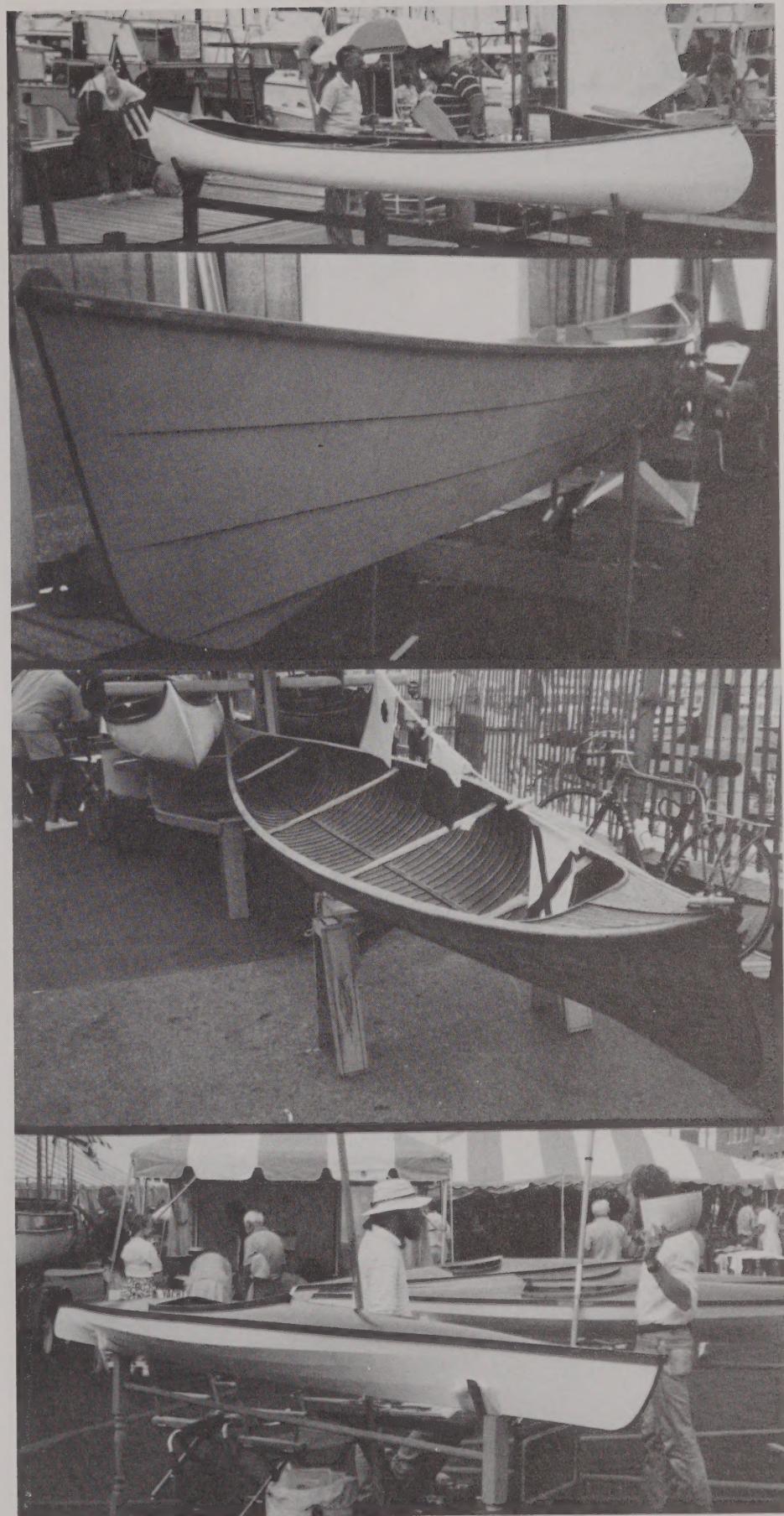
into each boat to achieve the degree of perfection he has. Fuat Latif, RD 1, Box 1780, Moretown, VT 05660.

Two years ago Dan Lindrooth of Mobile Marine, Huntingdon Valley, PA, was the only strip canoe builder on hand. He was here still this year, out on a demo dock, offering his stripper canoes and also a stitch and glue sailing dinghy for tryouts. Dan's been doing strip canoes a long time and has the technique perfected. Mobile Marine, 2924 Orchard Ln., Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006, (215) 947-9731.

Still more canoes. Tom Hill, now well known for his glued lapstrake ultra light boatbuilding, canoes and rowing and sailing hulls too, has been with the Wooden Boat Show since the beginning. It's been worth his time and money, despite being a one-man shop tucked away in northern Vermont. This year his usual small double paddle canoes were supplemented with a larger, longer sort of narrow sharpie styled boat, his "Spearfish". About 17 feet long and under 75 pounds as I recall. Amazing to go to heft an end of so large an appearing boat and find practically nothing there to lift. Tom expressed his firmly held conviction that wooden boat builders are "missing the boat" by staying away. Rather than revel in having the crowd so much to himself for his style of building, Tom wants to see wooden boat-builders follow his example, come into the Show and stay with it. For the good of the trade as a whole. Tom Hill, Boatbuilder, RR 594-16, Huntington, VT 05462, (802) 434-2532.

And finally on the canoe topic, there were the Ross Brothers of Florence, MA. The brothers buy up and restore classic wood/canvas canoes as well as other sorts of small boats, and bring a trailer rack full of their work to the Show. An eye catcher this year was an unrestored strip-built "English" canoe offered at \$3,000. To the uninitiated in canoes, a lot of money for "that old boat", but those who know a rare classic understand the asking price. Ross Brothers, 28 N. Maple St., Florence, MA 01060, (413) 586-3875..

A lonely kayak builder, Leander McC. Goodhart of Spring Creek Boatworks, stood amongst the canoe builders, his exotic looking canvas covered, wood framed boats certainly about as unique as you would find at the Show. His array of 12' and 16' kayaks stood on waist high pedestals, themselves of furniture quality. The two kayaks weigh in at 38 and 62 pounds, reflecting the quite substantial wood framed interiors. Here is a man off on his own course of wooden boat building. Spring Creek Boatworks, P.O. Box 548, Alexandria, VA 22313.



Still more canoes. Dan Lindrooth's strip built canoes. Tom Hill's glued lapstrake canoe. Ross Brothers' antique "English" canoe. Leander Goodhart's canvas/wood kayaks.

Paddles. With all these paddle powered craft on display? Well, the Reagans of Shaw & Tenney had their usual display of paddles and oars. Paul says they do not sell at the Show as everything they make up in Orono goes out the door already ordered. But they keep their time honored name before the padding and rowing public. Well, they do sell some paddles at the Show. Each year Paul runs off sev-

eral hundred small "souvenir" paddles to sell at \$3 a pop as something for folks to take home with them. Time pressures this year reduced this production run to about 250 paddles, so he marked them up to \$3.50 each. No problem, they all went anyway. Shaw & Tenney, Box 213, Orono, ME 04473.

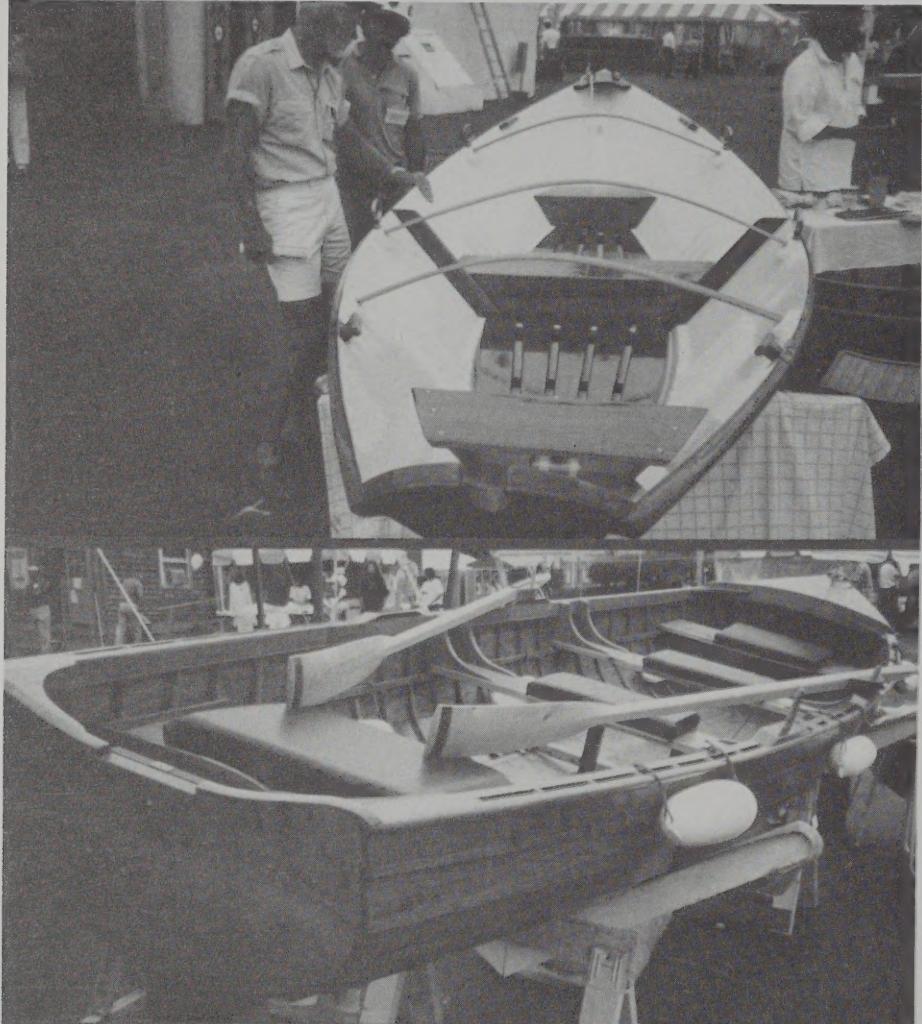
And Water Power Products of Nova Scotia had paddles, and oars too. Unlike Shaw & Tenney, Keith

brings an array of paddles and oars from Nova Scotia to sell. He was just back from an overseas trip to Douarnenez in France for the American Challenge match in the French gigs, for which he provided oars. The show "special" was a rather rugged canoe paddle with an extra heavy square tip that could serve as a "shoving off" lever if needed. Water Power Products, RR1, LaHave, Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia, Canada B0R 1C0, (902) 688-2351.

A couple of rowing craft we didn't mention earlier in this report were of some interest. Three guys from Sayville, Long Island, operate The Small Boat Works, and they offer the Phil Bolger designed Gloucester Light Dory in a variety of degrees of finish, from bare hull to yacht finish. Here's the prototypical plywood boat for the beginner to build, and seeing one yacht finished is quite something. Henry Ford once made some rare Model A "Town Cars" for chauffeur driven wealthy folks who wanted to own Model A's. Well, this was sort of like that, this really basic boat all dolled up with much varnished mahogany and superbly painted. John Violette, Ed Kaufmann and Chris Borovsky conceived of this approach. Small Boat Works, 123 Gillette Ave., Sayville, NY 11782, (516) 589-2523.

And from Ireland came the Irish Angler, a lapstrake beamy rowboat available in 14', 16' and 18' sizes, all varnished up inside and out with cushions on the seats and old fashioned thole pins for the oars. A Rhode Island firm, Aster-Airim, imports the boats, built by one Frank Kavanagh & Sons of Galway, Ireland. The boat on display was surrounded by Irish wool sweaters and genuine "wellies" rubber Wellington boots, and such Irish goods. The literature discusses how three generations of Kavannahs have built these boats for fishing on inland waters of Ireland's west coast Connemara region. Aster-Airim, 25 Robin Rd., Portsmouth, RI 02871, (401) 683-5519.

Finally on the rowing subject, there was Water Rower. This is a unique sort of indoor exercise rowing machine built in Providence, RI. It had particular appropriateness at the Wooden Boat Show for it is built of finely finished cherry hardwood, unlike the laboratory apparatus style of conventional rowing machines. And, also unique, is the drum of water within which an impeller blade turns, rather than the bicycle wheel device with air flaps on it. Designed by an industrial designer, the Water Rower is a complete marketing package that seems to bring together the beauty of wood with the more realistic pull of water in a rowing machine. Another useful feature is the way it can be stood up on end on wheels and rolled into a closet out of the



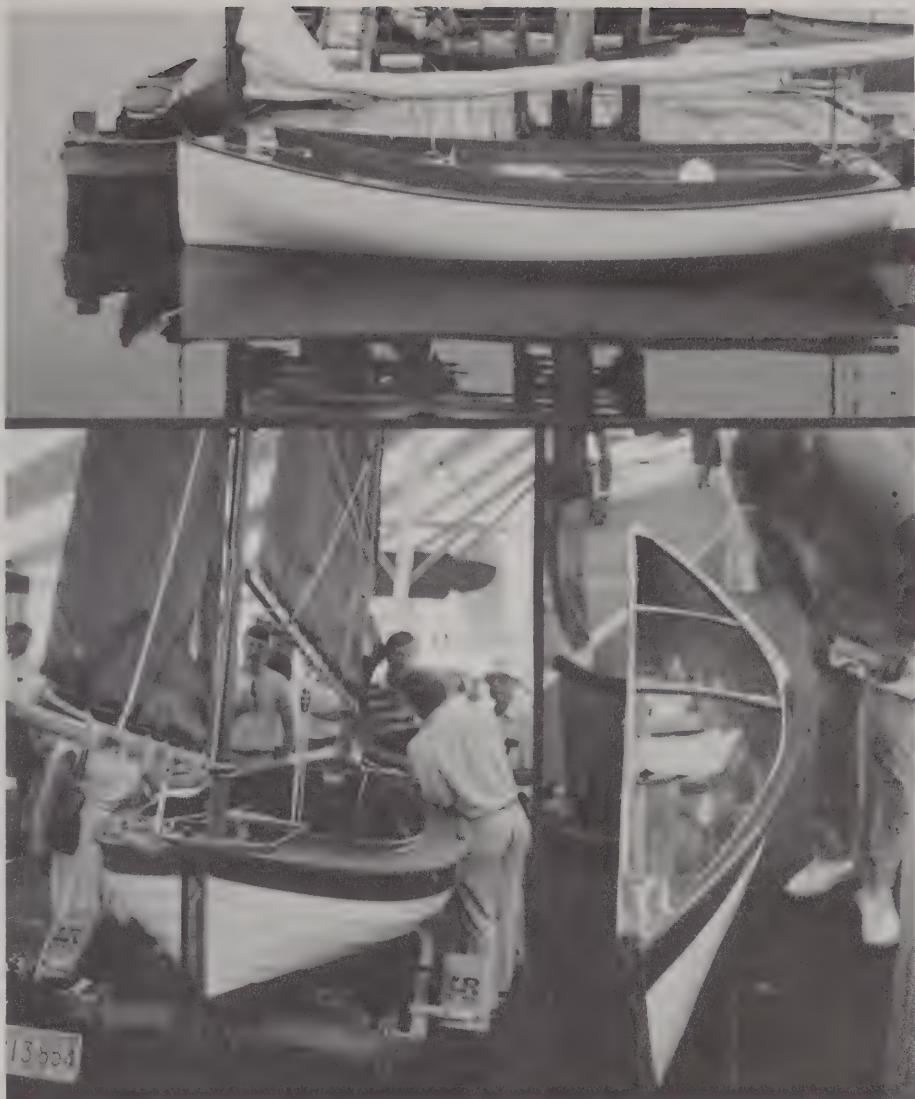
Top to bottom: The "yachty" Gloucester Gull. The Irish Angler. The Water Rower.

way. Marketing Director Bob Jones was right out there in the aisle inviting passers-by, one and all, in to sample the product. And he was very successful in so doing, when asked, many people will indeed accept your invitation to sample your wares. It works, they had sold two before the Show was over, when I visited them. Water Rower, 116 Chestnut St., Providence, RI 02903, (800) 852-2210 (in Rhode Island, (401) 861-9191).

Two builders of small sailboats represented opposing ends of construction techniques. The Bigelow family of Monument Beach, MA, had one of their traditional carvel planked Wenaumet Kitten 13.5' cat-boats in the water, they too had been in the Small Boat Show earlier this year. Mike, Jean and Michael are the current generations operating the family business, mainly an all-service boatyard, but also continuing the building of the Kitten, a Bigelow design that goes back 90 years to 1899. R. Bigelow & Co., 140 MacArthur Blvd., Monument Beach, MA 02532, (508) 759-5531.

Bill Clements had one of his glued lapstrake Nord Vinden double enders on display, this one elaborately fitted out with many nice bronze bits, including the fan centerboard developed by Bob LaVertue of Springfield, MA. Bill also had his now famous half-a-boat to confound passers-by. Removed from its wall location over the fireplace and set down in a boat show, this half of a lapstrake double ender indeed causes double takes. Bill shares Tom Hill's views on the Show and the lack of trade exhibitors. Busy as he was showing his gorgeous little Nord Vinden to people, Bill also very much believes that the trade needs such an annual show and should get behind it collectively. William Clements, Boatbuilder, P.O. Box 87, N. Billerica, MA 01862, (508) 663-3103.

Wooden power boats, in addition to the Gar Woods and the Landing Bass Boat already discussed, included a couple of different approaches to motorboating. Just down the dock from the big Gar Woods was a 20' Hacker Craft Rear Cockpit Sport Boat, one of those with the seating right in the stern, the engine up front. Nice details, wood and mechanical, characterized the boat. All that ostentatious chrome of the era somehow looks good juxtaposed with the gleaming varnished mahogany hull. Hacker Craft Boat Works, Silver Bay, NY 12874, (518) 543-6666.



Right from the top: The Bigelow family's "Wenaumet Kitten". Bill Clements' "Nord Vinden" and wall hanging half-a-boat. Detail on the 20' Hackercraft Rear Cockpit Sport Boat.



Across the lagoon in his usual spot was Brunswick, Maine's, Richard Pulsifer and his 22' Casco Bay Hampton inboard launch. Pulsifer builds his strip built boats one at a time, usually to order, another builder melding the old and the new, using air dried native pine, oak and cedar, natural crooks, steam bent frames, silicon bronze fastenings, 3M5200 adhesive, Yanmar diesel power. Richard builds each boat himself, usually three a year. Richard S. Pulsifer, Boatbuilder, RFD #3045, Brunswick, ME 04011, (207) 725-5457.

Then there was the 30' Elco electric fantail launch. Not to be confused with the later Elco motor-boats, this is a recreation of the earlier Elco electric launch of the turn of the century, by a new firm that has acquired the old trademark name. This boat is truly a statement about the tastes of the wealthy who chose to indulge in quiet summer pleasures on protected waters. Wicker furniture and all. Electric Launch Company, Inc., 16 Shadyside Rd., Ramsey, NJ 07446.

The Antique & Classic Boat Society had just a couple of runabouts on display this year. One had been brought in by Boyd Meford (see "Boats", June 1, 1988) who was to be a judge in the "Concourse d'Elegance". Being a judge of such elegant and expensive messing about in boats can be a stress creating role, I ventured to suggest to Boyd. But all smiles, he allowed that while that might be true, what a chance it was for a devotee of classic boats to see ALL THERE WAS TO SEE in so many such craft. Good point.

The "Best in Show" winner was "Explorer", a 70' North Sea Trawler extensively rebuilt and restored by Billings Marine of Stonington, Maine, for its New York photographer owner. A classic sea boat of working fishermen of the North Sea, this one had been built in Norway in 1970, later was going to pieces in New York harbor, where the present owner spotted it and decided to save it. Well, it was a "spare no expense" job, what a totally self-sufficient, comfortable home afloat, one that could cruise all the way to the Greek Islands from New York on one fillup! It was interesting to observe the women who were touring the show with their wooden boat nut husbands, light up with enthusiasm when they stepped below into the luxurious, yet completely nautical decor. Home indeed.

Left from the top: Dick Pulsifer's Casco Bay Hampton. The Elco electric launch. "Explorer", a North Sea trawler yacht, winner of "Best in Show".

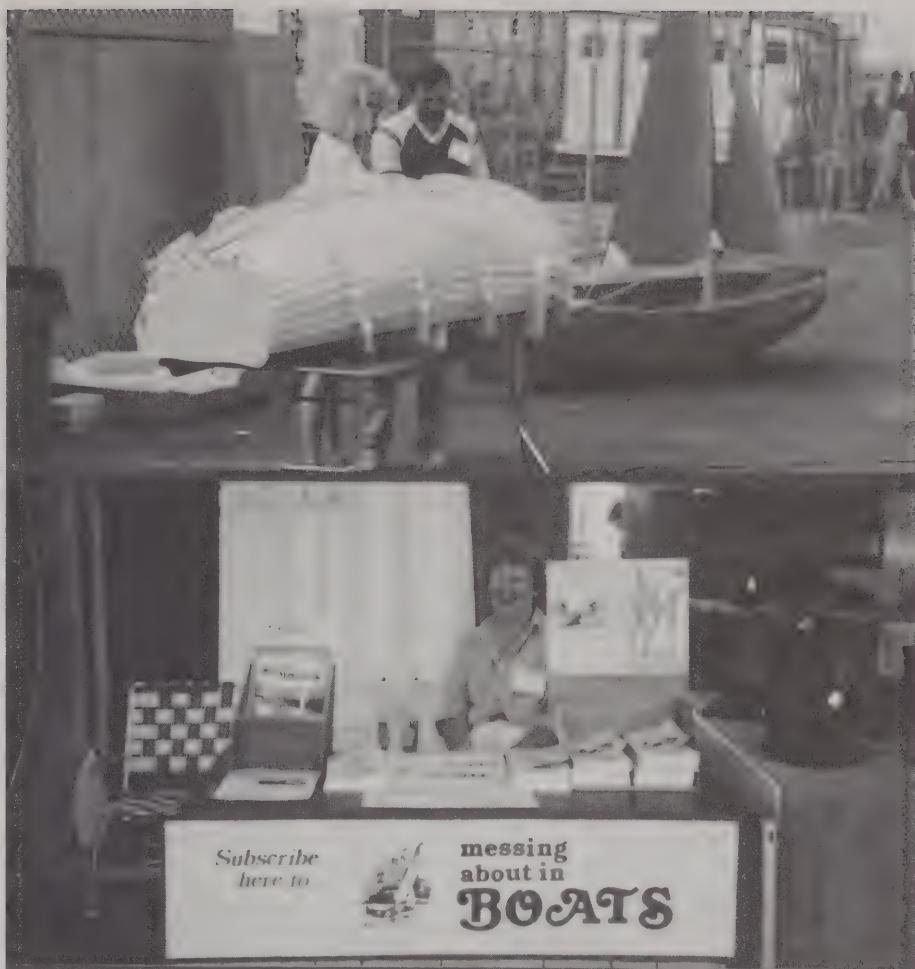
How about plans and kits? Already I've mentioned Doug Alvord's phenomenal success with his new Maine Sharpie designs. Platt Montfort was there too with his "Aerolite Geodesic" craft, now an established and accepted form of ultra light boatbuilding you can do yourself. He had one of his new \$10 sails made of Tyvek (TM) house wrap rigged on his Whitehall, and one passerby commented to me (when I filled in briefly for Platt at his booth) about it being a "pattern" for the real thing. No, sir, it WAS the real thing. It works too. Geodesic Boats, RFD 2 Box 416, Wiscasset, ME 04578.

Merryman Boats' put together one of their "Boat in a Box" kits in a corner of the small boat builder section, these come in 6' and 8' sizes, transom bowed lapstrake, full bodied dinghies, with a wheel on one end and handles on the other for getting to the water. Merryman Boats, 127 W. North St., Ithaca, NY 148847, (517) 875-3788.

And then there was us at Messing About in Boats, for I had this year brought down one of my Cokleshell 10', 30 pound, stitch and glue kayaks. I had such good response to it at Mystic in June, with requests for building plans, that I put together building instructions and full size patterns for the home builder, and showed off the boat I built for Jane (it's much prettier than my own prototype). We did really well too, a lot of interest and sales, cold turkey with no prior promotion. More details in this issue in a separate article.

Towering over the Concours d'Elegance area was "HMS Rose", a replica of an 18th century British square rigger. Now owned by a group known as the HMS Rose Foundation, another non-profit historical ship educational organization, the square rigger is home ported in Bridgeport, Connecticut and is characterized in the brochure as "A Tall Ship for Connecticut". We went on board for a look around and it was interesting. This replica was built in 1970, so this is no resurrection of a genuine original. It was built to essentially the same plans as the original, built in 1757, but the original owner apparently abandoned her in Newport in the late '70's. She was purchased by a Bridgeport enthusiast and the foundation was created to restore her. Major restoration was done, even on a ship but fifteen years old.

After our experience on the "U.S.S. Constitution", it was hard to get excited about "HMS Rose". The ship does have an "authentic" look to it in its condition, not yachtish at all, quite workmanlike. But the intrusion of today's electrical switchboards and the diesel engine room (not open to the public) detract some from the illusion



From the top:  
Merryman's  
"Boat in a Box"  
goes together.  
Jane tends the  
booth for us.  
The helm on  
"HMS Rose".

of antiquity. Yet it's quite a ship and worth a visit if you find old square riggers interesting. She is claimed to be the largest operational wooden sailing vessel in the world, at 179' LOA and 500 tons. Soon "HMS Rose" will become U.S. Coast Guard certified as the largest sail training vessel in America. So the folks behind this effort are achieving their goals, not an easy thing to do on this scale in old wooden boats. HMS Rose, Captains Cove Seaport, 1 Postwick Ave., Bridgeport, CT 06605, (203) 335-1433.

I had planned to have a look around "Shamrock" also, but by the time I got to it on Sunday, the big J-Boat was gone, off on other affairs for the owners, the Museum of Yachting. And I never did get around the corner to look over the yachts in the Concours d'Elegance either. I did take a quick tour up and down the docks with all the used wooden yachts offered for sale, and noted the preponderance this year of large motor yachts, some of them surprisingly rough looking. Viewing these quite costly craft and their hopeful owners alert for any prospect who might take their former dreamboat off their hands, always saddens me a bit. Sure we all move on in our dreams of our ideal boats, it's just that these people have much larger scale dreams than I do, with consequent larger scale partings and all the difficulties that size impose.

If you happened to be the owner of a big yacht, several firms were there to solicit your business doing necessary repairs, maintenance or restorations. Those I noticed in passing were Noank Shipyard, Wood Boats, Inc., Covey Island Boatworks, Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, and Rivendell Marine. You find these advertised in "Wooden Boat" usually.

Some useful exhibits for the

Pert Lowell Company's Town Class sloop. "To bad they only build them now in fiberglass." ???



builder or restorer were those of various suppliers of materials. Lunenburg Foundry had lots of nice bronze. System Three and Cougeon offered epoxy information and advice. Boatlife had an array of their stickum pukkies, cleaners and git rots, and were handing out free samples. The Detco folks also had more sticky stuff to offer. Bruynzeel displayed their top line marine plywoods. JT's Ship Chandlery had lots of gear. Ed's Power Tools (who?) had power tools in abundance and at very attractive prices. There were people offering planers, with their attendant noisy demonstrations, and paint spraying systems. Chesapeake Marine Fasteners came up into JT's and Jamestown Distributors' bailiwick to display their products. So, lots of good stuff if you were involved in building or restoring.

Hard to get excited about books and magazines at a boat show, but we were not alone. "Soundings" and "Wooden Boat" both were on hand, the latter with their comprehensive array of wooden boat related items supplementary to the magazine itself, including books and plans. Armchair Sailor had a raft of new books, but it was Sea Fever Books with the used nautical books that was attracting a lot of attention. I spotted Steven Jones' "Backwaters" on their rack early, later it was gone. The author had been around to say hello, and ended up autographing the old copy of his out of print book for the pleased buyer. Nice touch, unplanned as it was. Sea Fever Books, P.O. Box 461, East Haddam, CT 06423, (203) 873-8881.

And finally, my friends the Pert Lowell Co., builders of the Town Class sloop since the early '30's, had two of their wooden lapstrake daysailers on display, one in the tent, the other in the lagoon. They find many folks walk up and remi-

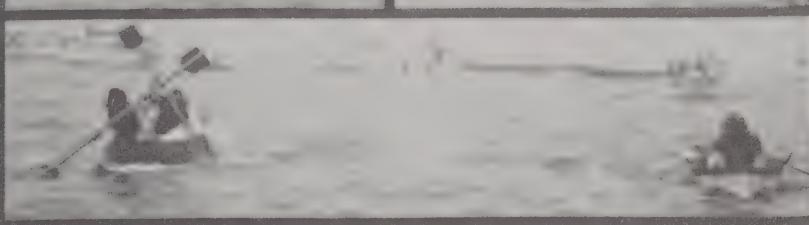
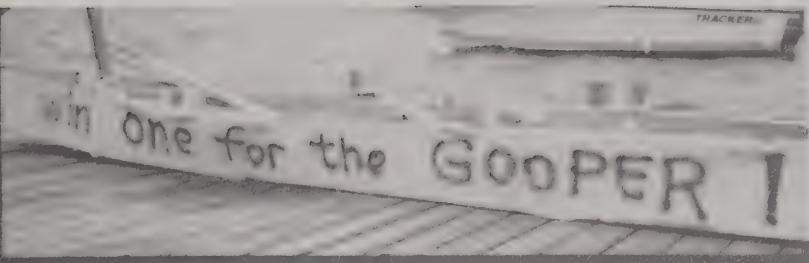
nisce about when "they used to sail a Townie", this happens with a boat with over 50 years of history behind it. But one older man capped the Show for my friends, when he came up, admired the Townie on display, chatted some about those good old days, and then offered, "Yep, it sure was a nice old boat, too bad you only build them now in fiberglass."

The quick and dirty boatbuilding contest continues to appeal, but this year a new aspect was added, a \$500 cash prize. Now there was money to win. Sure enough, at one point during the building part of the contest, the elapsed time for one team to build its boat was "protested" by another team over a technicality involving the raising of the mast supposedly being part of the elapsed time, even though the mast would then immediately be lowered and, anyway, the tent was too low to raise the mast in question beneath it. The issue became moot when the team involved failed to finish well enough in the race to win anyway.

With that unattractive new happening in what is supposed to be an "all in fun" contest put aside, the usual creativeness in design and construction appeared. The Sika people solicit design proposals from would-be builders and select a variety of designs, rather than all simple dories, for instance. So there were a polynesian proa, a flattie skiff, a plumb sided skiff, a very nice double ended, double chined rowboat and a sort of banks dory included. The fastest building time was about 53 minutes for the flattie skiff, just a long rectangular box with quite a bit of rocker to get the ends out of the water.

The big race is a crowd pleaser, an upwind leg under oar or paddle, a downwind leg under sail, and a crosswind final leg under either or both forms of propulsion. It was remarkably close with the bright orange, high sided, boxy skiff just edging the double ender by inches, due mostly to the earlier collapse of the double ender's sail rig on the downwind leg. But, the double ender, easily the best boat, took overall on the best combination of building and racing places. The drama the crowd hoped for was in the "photo finish" of these two, both crashing bow on into the finish dock, and in the quite spectacular sinking of the flattie skiff after it was run down by the banks dory on the crosswind leg. The skiff's very low freeboard couldn't handle the tipping from the collision.

Another non-finisher was the proa, which suffered from "uncontrollable leaking" according to its builders. It was brought in on the deck of a rescue boat. Not enough Sika Flex used, apparently.



Action in the Skia Challenge. Left from the top: The proa under construction. This high-sided skiff was surprisingly seaworthy and fast. Right from the top: A touch of "political" commentary. Collision is imminent, and sinking results. The race to the finish was close. Arrival was abrupt, note springy bulge in hull at gunwale.

A black and white photograph of two men in white shirts and dark trousers using a WaterRower exercise machine. They are seated in a wooden frame with their legs extended, pulling on the ropes attached to a flywheel. The machine is made of solid American cherry wood.

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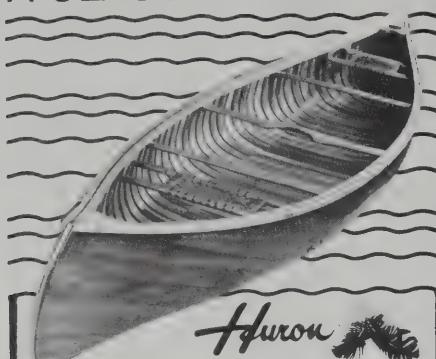
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# HAPPENINGS

### ANORAK IN CONNECTICUT

Kayaker Don Gorski is organizing interested sea kayakers in Connecticut into an ANORAK "Local Paddling Group" with the intent of introducing all to one another and establishing communication for paddling partners and group outings. Don's hoping to put together an informal meeting of those interested somewhere along the Connecticut shore this fall. Don Gorski, 333 Hampton Ct., Newington, CT 06111, (203) 561-4474 days until 2 p.m. and weekends anytime.

### ISLAND JOURNAL 1988

Maine's Island Institute is a non profit organization devoted to the well being of the several thousand islands on the Maine coast. It's not concerned only with touring, or ecology, but also with cultural and economic subjects. Once a year they publish a superb yearbook, the "Island Journal". If you are a member of the group, you get it automatically. If not, you can obtain a copy for \$9.95 from the Island Institute, 60 Ocean St. Rockland, ME 04841.

The 1988 issue includes topics like dealing with tourist crowds on Monhegan; a pictorial display of Rockwell Kent paintings of that island in bygone times; comments on the shortcomings of Maine's latest inter-island ferry boat; reminiscing on growing up on a Maine island, a kayak camping cruise to some of the islands; and similar fare.

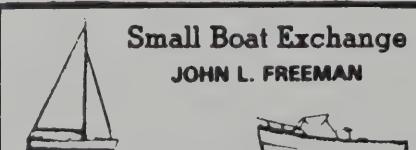
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### NANTUCKET COMES TO BATH

The "Nantucket" lightship will be visiting the Maine Maritime Museum from October 2nd through the 16th where it will be open to visitors at specified hours and during the October 2nd Sea Fair at Percy & Small Shipyard. The "Nantucket" is 150' long, the largest of the lightships. She was retired in 1975 and is now a floating museum about the lightship service. Maine Maritime Museum, (207) 443-1316.

### MARITIME ARTS & CRAFTS FESTIVAL

South Street Seaport in New York city will host a weekend "Maritime Arts & Crafts Festival" over Columbus Day weekend, October 8th and 9th, with over 30 artisans and craftspersons practicing a variety of maritime crafts. A special reduced admission of \$2 is in effect for the occasion. South Street Seaport Museum, (212) 669-9400.

### AND A TRIP TO THE LIGHTHOUSES

South Street Seaport also has a day trip planned out to the Navesink and Sandy Hook lighthouses by bus on October 22nd. The all-day outing costs \$33.50 per person, including lunch, slide show, bus fare and site admissions. South Street Seaport Museum, (212) 669-9416.

### A DIFFERENT DOWNEAST BOATBUILDING TOUR

The North Carolina Maritime Museum of Beaufort, NC, has a "Downeast Boatbuilding Tour" scheduled for October 14th, but their "downeast" will take them to boatbuilders in eastern Carteret County, NC. It's an all-day affair, reservation required at \$5. North Carolina Maritime Museum, (919) 728-7317.

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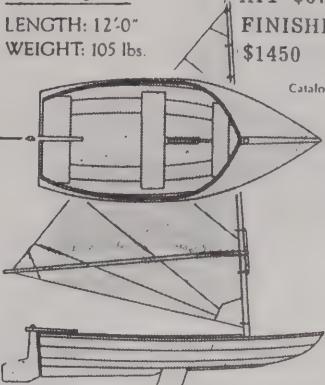
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# VOYAGE OF THE PAPER CANOE:

A GEOGRAPHICAL JOURNEY OF 2500 MILES, FROM

QUEBEC TO THE GULF OF MEXICO,

DURING THE YEARS 1874-5.

BY

NATHANIEL H. BISHOP,

## CHAPTER III.

FROM THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER TO TICONDEROGA, LAKE CHAMPLAIN.

THE ADIRONDACK SURVEY.—A CANVAS BOAT.—DIMENSIONS OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN.—PORT KENT.—USABLE CHASM.—ARRIVAL AT TICONDEROGA.

On Monday, July 20th, we rowed southward. Our route now skirted the western shore of Lake Champlain, which is the eastern boundary of the great Adirondack wilderness. Several of the tributaries of the lake take their rise in this region, which is being more and more visited by the hunter, the fisherman, the artist, and the tourist, as its natural attractions are becoming known to the public. The geodetical survey of the northern wilderness of New York state, known as the Adirondack country, under the efficient and energetic labors of Mr. Verplanck Colvin, will cover an area of nearly five thousand square miles. In his report of the great work he eloquently says:

"The Adirondack wilderness may be considered the wonder and the glory of New York. It is a vast *natural* park, one immense and silent forest, curiously and beautifully broken by the gleaming waters of a myriad of lakes, between which rugged mountain-ranges rise as a sea of granite billows. At the northeast the mountains culminate within an area of some hundreds of square miles; and here savage, treeless peaks, towering above the timber line, crowd one another, and, standing gloomily shoulder to shoulder, rear their rocky crests amid the frosty clouds. The wild beasts may look forth from

the ledges on the mountain-sides over unbroken woodlands stretching beyond the reach of sight—beyond the blue, hazy ridges at the horizon. The voyager by the canoe beholds lakes in which these mountains and wild forests are reflected like inverted reality; now wondrous in their dark grandeur and solemnity, now glorious in resplendent autumn color of pearly beauty. Here—thrilling sound to huntsman—echoes the wild melody of the hound, awakening the solitude with deep-mouthed bay as he pursues the swift career of deer. The quavering note of the loon on the lake, the mournful hoot of the owl at night, with rarer forest voices, have also to the lover of nature their peculiar charm, and form the wild language of this forest.

"It is this region of lakes and mountains—whose mountain core is well shown by the illustration, 'the heart of the Adirondacks'—that our citizens desire to reserve forever as a public forest park, not only as a resort of rest for themselves and for posterity, but for weighty reasons of political economy. For reservoirs of water for the canals and rivers; for the amelioration of spring floods by the preservation of the forests sheltering the deep winter snows; for the salvation of the timber,—our only cheap source of lumber supply should the Canadian and western markets be ruined by fires, or otherwise lost to us,—its preservation as a state forest is urgently demanded. To the number of those chilly peaks amid which our principal rivers take their rise, I have added by measurement a dozen or more over four thousand feet in height, which were before either nameless, or only vaguely known by the names given them by hunters and trappers.

"It is well to note that the final hypsometrical computations fully affirm my discovery that in Mount Haystack we have another mountain of five thousand feet altitude. It may not be uninteresting also to remark that the difference between the altitudes of Mount Marcy and Mount Washington of the White Mountains of New Hampshire is found to be quite eight hundred feet. Mount Marcy, Mount MacIntyre, and Mount Haystack are to be remembered as the three royal summits of the state.

"The four prominent peaks are—

Mount Marcy { Mount Tahawus—"I cleave the clouds," . . . } 5,402.65

Mount Haystack,	. . . . .	5,006.73
Mount MacIntyre,	. . . . .	5,201.80
Mount Skylight,	. . . . .	4,977.76."

If the general reader will pardon a seeming digression to gratify the curiosity of some of my boating friends, I will give from the report of the Adirondack Survey Mr. Colvin's account of his singular boat,—one of the lightest yet constructed, and weighing only as much as a hunter's double-barrelled gun.

Mr. Colvin says:

"I also had constructed a canvas boat, of my own invention, for use in the interior of the wilderness on such of the mountain lakes as were inaccessible to boats, and which it would be necessary to map. This boat was peculiar; no more frame being needed than could be readily cut in thirty minutes in the first thicket. It was twelve feet long, with thin sheet brass prows, riveted on, and so fitted as to receive the keelson, prow pieces, and ribs (of boughs), when required; the canoe being made water-proof with pure rubber gum, dissolved in naphtha, rubbed into it."

Page 43 of Mr. Colvin's report informs the reader how well this novel craft served the purpose for which it was built.

"September 12 was devoted to levelling and topographical work at Ampersand Pond, a solitary lake locked in by mountains, and seldom visited. There was no boat upon its surface, and in order to complete the hydrographical work we had now, of necessity, to try my portable canvas boat, which had hitherto done service as bed or tent. Cutting green rods for ribs, we unrolled the boat and tied them in, lashing poles for gunwales at the sides, and in a short time our canvas canoe, buoyant as a cork, was floating on the water. The guides, who had been unable to believe that the flimsy bag they carried could be used as a boat, were in ecstasies. Rude but efficient paddles were hastily hewn from the nearest tree, and soon we were all gliding in our ten-pound boat over the waves of Ampersand, which glittered in the morning sunlight. To the guides the boat was something astonishing; they could not refrain from laughter to find that they were really afloat in it, and pointed with surprise at the waves, which could be seen *through* the boat, rippling against its sides. With the aid of the boat, with prismatic compass and sextant, I

was able to secure an excellent map of the lake; and we almost succeeded in catching a deer, which was driven into the lake by a strange hound. The dog lost the trail at the water, and desiring to put him on the track, we paddled to him. He scrambled into the boat with an air of satisfaction, as if he had always travelled in just such a thing. Soon we had regained the trail, and making the mountains echo to his voice, he again pursued the deer on into the trackless forest.

"Continuing our work, we passed down into the outlet, where, in trying to effect a landing, we suddenly came face to face with a large panther, which had evidently been watching us. He fled at our approach.

"Our baggage was quickly packed, and the temporary frame of the canoe having been taken out and thrown away, we rolled up our boat and put it in the bottom of a knapsack. . . . The same day by noon we reached Cold Brook again, here navigable. In an hour and a half we had re-framed the canvas, cut out two paddles from a dry cedar-tree; had dinner, loaded the boat, and were off, easily gliding down stream to the Saranac River. Three men, the heaped baggage in the centre, and the solemn hound, who seemed to consider himself part of the company, sitting upright near the prow, forming in all a burden of about one third of a ton, was a severe test of the green boughs of which we had made the frame.

"Ascending the Saranac River, we struck out into the broad Saranac Lake, some six miles in length, and though the winds and the waves buffeted us, the canvas sides of the boat responding elastically to each beat of the waves, we got safely along till near the Sister Islands, when, the wind blowing very fresh, the white-capped rollers began to pitch into the boat. The exertions of the guides brought us under the lee shore, and at evening we disembarked at Martin's."

Geographies, guide-books, and historical works frequently give the length of Lake Champlain as one hundred and fifty, or at the least one hundred and forty miles. These distances are not correct. The lake proper begins at a point near Ticonderoga and ends not far from the boundary line of the United States and Canada. Champlain is not less than one hundred nor more than one hundred and twelve miles long. The Champlain Canal, which connects the river that flows from White-

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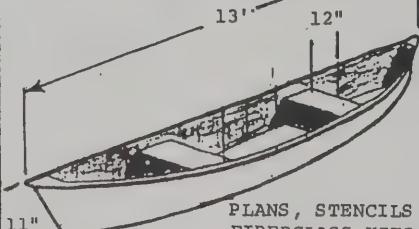
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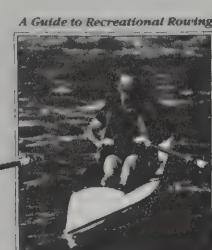
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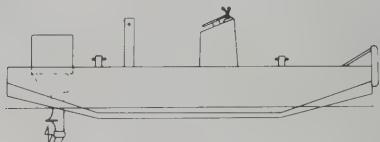


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hall into the lake with the Hudson River, is sixty-four miles long, ending at the Erie Canal at Junction Lock, near Troy. From Junction Lock to Albany, along the Erie Canal, it is six miles: or seventy miles from Whitehall to Albany by canal route. This distance has frequently been given as fifty-one miles.

From the United States boundary line southward it is a distance of seven miles to Isle la Motte, which island is five and a half miles long by one and three quarters wide, with a light-house upon its northwest point. From the New York shore of Monti Bay, across the end of Isle la Motte to St. Albans, Vermont, is a distance of thirteen and a half miles. Two miles south of the island, on the west shore, is Point au Roche light; and two miles and three quarters south of it is Rocky Point, the terminus of Long Point. Next comes Treadwell Bay, three miles across; then two miles further on is Cumberland Head and its light-house. West from Cumberland, three miles across a large bay, is Plattsburgh, at the mouth of the Saranac River, a town of five thousand inhabitants. In this vicinity Commodore Macdonough fought the British fleet in 1814. These are historic waters, which have witnessed the scene of many a bloody struggle between French, English, and Indian adversaries. Off Cumberland Head, and dividing the lake, is Grand Isle, twelve miles in length and from three to four in width.

The village of Port Kent is near the mouth of the Ausable River, which flows out of the northern Adirondack country. A few miles from the lake is the natural wonder, the Ausable Chasm, which is nearly two miles in length. The river has worn a channel in the Potsdam sandstone formation to a depth, in places, of two hundred feet. Between high walls of rock the river is compressed in one place to ten feet in breadth, and dashes wildly over falls and rapids on its way to Lake Champlain. It is said to rival the famous Swiss Gorge du Triant.

Schuyler's Island, upon the shore of which we passed Tuesday night, is nearly in the latitude of Burlington, Vermont. The distance from Port Douglass on the west, to Burlington on the east side of Champlain, over an open expanse of water, is nine miles and three quarters. We breakfasted by starlight, and passed Ligonier's Point early in the day. One mile and a half east

of it is the group of little islands called Four Brothers. The lake grew narrower as we rowed southward, until, after passing Port Henry Iron Works, and the high promontory of Crown Point, upon which are the ruins of the French Fort Frederic, built in 1731, it has a width of only two miles.

At eight o'clock p. m. we dropped anchor under the banks of Ticonderoga, not far from the outlet of Lake George. It is four miles by road between the two lakes. The stream which connects them can be ascended from Champlain about two miles to the Iron Works, the remainder of the river being filled with rapids.

A railroad now (1867) connects lakes George and Champlain, over which an easy portage can be made. The ruined walls of Fort Ticonderoga are near the railroad landing. A little south of this the lake grows so narrow as to resemble a river. At its southern end, twenty-four miles from Ticonderoga, is situated the town of Whitehall, where the Champlain and Hudson River Canal forms a junction with Lake Champlain. This long river-like termination of Champlain gave to the Indians the fancy of calling it *Tisinondrosa* — "the tail of the lake;" which in mouths inexperienced with the savage tongue became corrupted into Ticonderoga.

Wednesday broke upon us a glorious day. Proceeding three miles to Patterson's Landing, into the "tail of the lake," I left the Mayeta to explore on foot the shores of Lake George, promising Bodfish to join him at Whitehall when my work should be finished.

(To Be Continued)

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That's what I entitled the information I've gathered together on my little 10' mini-kayak for people who have tried it and wanted to know about building one for themselves. After building a "production" model from my prototype, I developed a set of full-size patterns for all the parts and ten pages of illustrated building instructions. Those who had inquired at the Mystic Small Craft meet in June, and who looked over the finished product at the Wooden Boat Show, already have their patterns and instructions. Now's the time to promote the little boat here.

"Cockleshell" came about after I had tried several of the available mini-kayaks on the market last fall. Those experiences gave me some ideas on what I really would want. Small size and light weight for use on protected waters, and easily hand-carried alone considerable distances to reach such waters. I didn't just buy an available boat, because I didn't like some features on each, and they started off around \$350 anyway, going up from there to as much as \$750. Too much for an occasional use toy.

The design? I'm no designer, but I had a feel for what I wanted. So I sketched out a double-ended craft 10' overall by 28" beam, hard chine, shallow vee bottom, pointy ends, easy to form out of thin plywood. It would be stitch-and-glue construction, of 1/8" lauan ply for lightness, fiberglassed on the bottom for abrasion resistance, epoxy glued, seams taped, and sealed. From my sketches I laid out a 1/8th scale model on matboard, and did a lot of cutting and fitting until I liked what I had. I scaled these parts up and then cut out full-size pieces from 1/8" ply wall panels from the lumberyard.

As I stitched and glued it up, I added things like full length stringers along each gunwale to which I could tack and glue the decks. The cockpit dimensions came from my prior kayak experience. The prototype went into nearby Hood's Pond last November and I liked it. When Jane tried it out and also liked it, I knew I had something, for she is not happy with paddling alone in a small boat. "Cockleshell" had reassuring stability and great maneuverability, and was not intimidating to use.

So I built Jane her own this spring, taking paper patterns off the prototype, then custom fitting the pieces for her boat as I dry assembled it, to get rid of the prototype's lumps and awkward spots. From these final fitted parts I then made permanent templates, before gluing her boat together. I showed the boat to friend Bart Hauthaway, who tried it at the Canoe Symposium in Maine, and returned to tell me, "I like it, it's cute!"

It all costs under \$150 for materials, with the epoxy alone using

## YOU CAN BUILD

# Cockleshell

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks



up close to \$50. I discourage those who suggest using cheaper polyester resin, this boat is real thin lauan ply and needs the strength of epoxy glued joints and wood sealing. Two sheets of the 1/8" lauan ply come to under \$30 at the top price. Fiberglass tape and 10 ounce cloth for the bottom add another \$15 or so. For about \$10 I made a nice double paddle (plans included), adjustable from 6' to 8' in length and for feathering either way. The paint job came out of two aerosol spray cans of automotive lacquer. A "burgundy and pink" paint job (specified by Jane) is not easily come by with marine paints.

The finished boat includes a seat and back, interior bulkheads that form large sealed flotation chambers on each end, two storage bins either side of the seat under the side decks, and a short skeg to make it track reasonably for its 8' waterline length, and weighs 28 pounds. The foam insulation tubing designed for water pipes fits around the cockpit coaming and makes a soft pad for shouldering the boat on for the hike in to the marsh or pond.

So now I'm in the "plans" business, though there really are no "plans". For \$20 you can get the complete set of full size patterns for all the pieces (on a 16' roll of heavy kraft paper), the ten-page illustrated instructions, and System Three's nice little "Epoxy Book" that tells you all you need to know about using epoxy, if you're not experienced with the stuff.

How long to build it? That de-

pends on your expertise in working with wood and glue. As little as ten hours, as many as 30 to 40. Nothing is at all hard, but lack of any prior building experience will make your progress slower.

Sources for materials? If no local lumberyard has 1/8" lauan (known as "doorskin"), the marine plywood dealers who advertise in boating magazines can supply it. The epoxy you can get from System Three (or Gougeon if you prefer) or a distributor like Jamestown Distributors in Jamestown, RI. Fiberglass and tape are available from most marine supply houses or you can mail order it from Merton's in Springfield, MA.

This is a simple winter project, the space you need is essentially some place where you can set up a 4x8 sheet of 3/4 ply on sawhorses as a layout and building table. And you'll need warmth to cure the epoxy, no cold shop ambience.

If you want to build a "Cockleshell", send \$20 to me at Boats, 29 Burley St., Wenham, MA 01984, and I'll return mail your patterns and instructions. If you're not sure, I'll send you just the instructions so you can see all the details first, no charge, just ask. You cannot build the boat from the instructions, you will still need the patterns if you then decide to go ahead. Then send the \$20.

This is already becoming an interesting little sideline to the magazine. I mean, if "Wooden Boat" can go into the plans business, then why not...!



Left from the top: The finished hull. The three-part adjustable \$10 paddle. The rear deck is fitted. Jane found the boat to be confidence inspiring. Right from the top: Gluing up the hull and bulkheads. Bottom up, showing the skeg.

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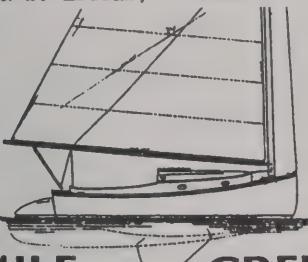


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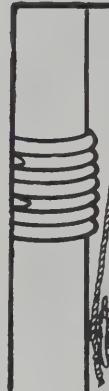
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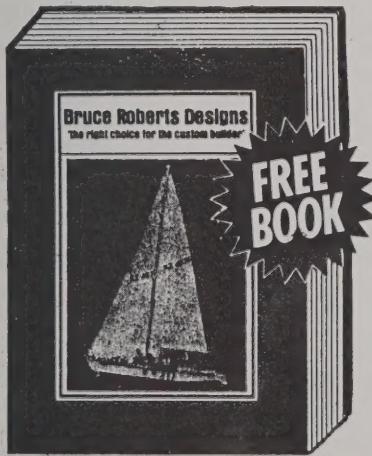
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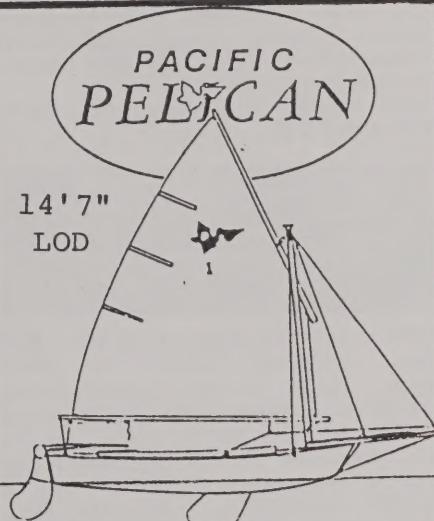
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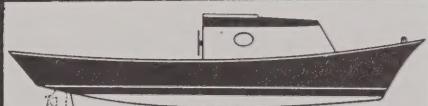
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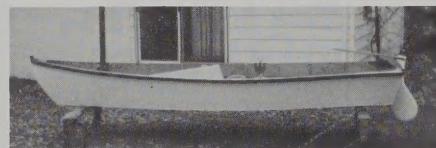
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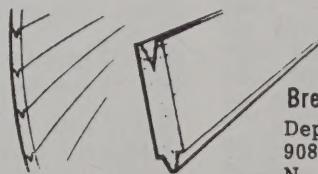
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